

VZCZCXRO8398
OO RUEHAST
DE RUEHROV #0161 2141528
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 021528Z AUG 06
FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0436
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN 0464

UNCLAS VATICAN 000161

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [VT](#)
SUBJECT: LEBANON: POPE RENEWS CALL FOR URGENT

¶1. (U) During his weekly Wednesday public audience in Rome on August 2, Pope Benedict XVI issued a new appeal for peace in the Middle East, with specific reference to Qana, Lebanon. Original text, and informal post translation, follow in paras 2-3.

¶2. (U) Begin text of Italian original:

Invito tutti, infine, a continuare a pregare per la cara e martoriata regione del Medio Oriente. I nostri occhi sono pieni delle agghiaccianti immagini dei corpi straziati di tante persone, soprattutto di bambini -- penso, in particolare a Qana, in Libano. Desidero ripetere che nulla può giustificare lo spargimento di sangue innocente, da qualunque parte esso venga! Con il cuore colmo di afflizione, rinnovo ancora una volta un pressante appello all'immediata cessazione di tutte le ostilità e di tutte le violenze, mentre esorto la comunità internazionale e quanti sono coinvolti più direttamente in questa tragedia a porre al più presto le condizioni per una definitiva soluzione politica della crisi, capace di consegnare un avvenire più sereno e sicuro alle generazioni che verranno.
End text of original.

¶3. (U) Begin post informal translation:

Finally, I invite everyone to continue to pray for the beloved and martyred region of the Middle East. We see before our eyes the blood-chilling images of mangled bodies of many people, especially children -- I am thinking particularly of Qana, in Lebanon. I wish to repeat that nothing can justify the shedding of innocent blood, for whatever reason! With a heart filled with grief, I once again renew an urgent appeal for the immediate cessation of all hostilities and all violence, and I urge the international community and all those directly involved in this tragedy to put in place as quickly as possible the conditions for a definitive political solution to the crisis, one able to deliver a more peaceful and safe future for the coming generations.
End informal translation.

Comment

¶4. (SBU) As noted in Post's previous reporting, the Holy See's traditional concern for civilians and against violence will always prejudice it against military solutions. Now, after several balanced comments about diplomatic efforts underway, the events in Qana have pushed the pope and the Vatican's foreign policy apparatus to a stronger call for a ceasefire. The pope cut short his Wednesday audience due to the stifling heat today in Rome, but he made sure to get out this message. His direct reference to Qana, his vivid language, and his insistent tone leave no doubt about his deep personal desire for an immediate ceasefire as well as a lasting solution

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